UKRAINE

AN ATLAS OF ITS HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

G. W. SIMPSON

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UKRAINE

A Series of Maps and Explanations Indicating the Historic and Contemporary Geographical Position of the Ukrainian People

by

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Preface

The aim of this booklet is to indicate very briefly the historical development and the present position of the Ukrainian people in Europe. It is impossible on small maps to show the boundary details; or in a restricted selection of maps to indicate the variations and changes in boundary lines that occur within a century or even shorter period of time. What is here attempted is to give a telescoped picture of where the Ukrainian people are at present, where they were when they emerged in European history, and the general course of their historic development. The maps are given in barest detail to emphasize the chief points, and the explanations accompanying the maps are likewise restricted to the most important facts. It is hoped in this way that the public may be introduced to one of the most important of Europe's political problems — the political future of the Ukrainian people.

The maps were drafted by Mr. A. W. Davey of Saskatoon.

G. W. S.

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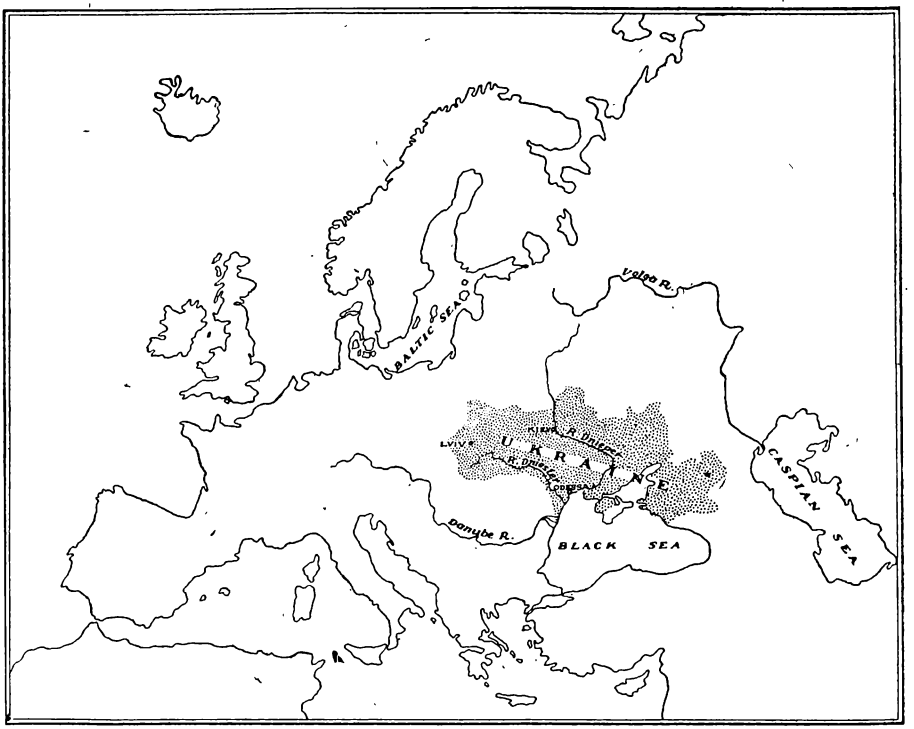

1 The Present Position of the Ukrainian People in Europe.

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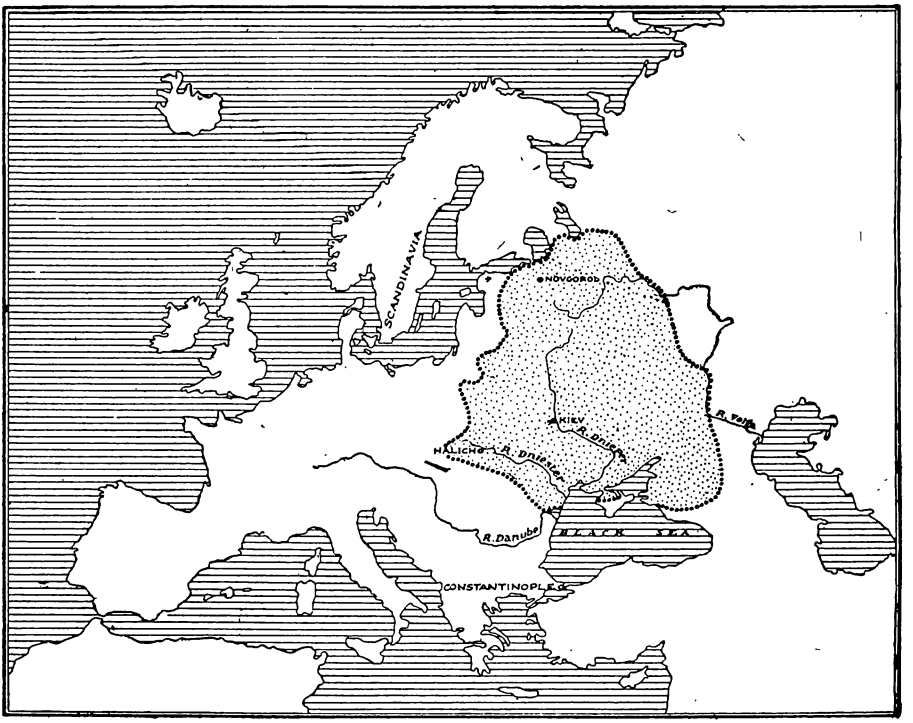
In Europe some 40,000,000 people speak Ukrainian, a distinctive Slavic language. These Ukrainians occupy the territory immediately north of the Black Sea. The two rivers, Dnieper and Dniester, constitute, and have always constituted, the central geographical landmarks of their settlements. While the area of settlement and occupation has expanded and contracted at different times the Ukrainians now inhabit the same region in Europe which their ancestors have held for over a thousand years. The city of Kiev is the ancient political capital and the traditional centre of cultural life.

The Ukraine is an important factor in the European situation because of the extent of its territory, the richness of its resources, the size of its population, and its strategic position with reference to the Black Sea.



2. The Kiev State.

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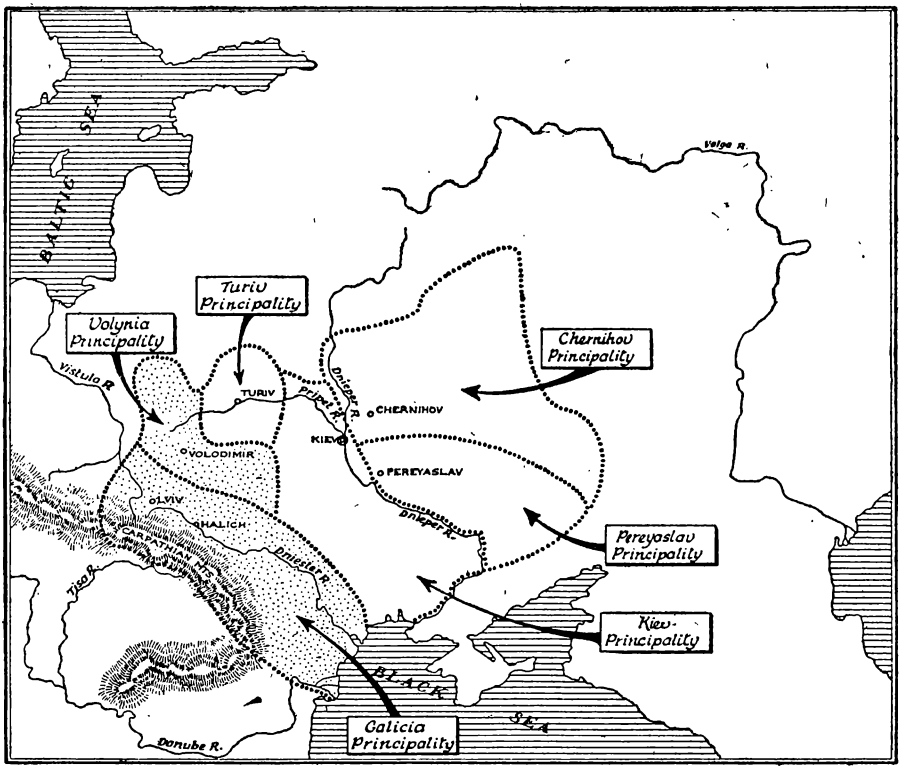
The Slavic tribes were widely scattered in Eastern Europe by the Eighth century (A.D.). Some of these tribes were already beginning to achieve a measure of consolidation when the Northmen from Scandinavia in the Ninth century established at Kiev a flourishing dynastic centre. The region of the Dnieper was brought into close trade and cultural relations with Constantinople, the capital city of the Eastern Roman Empire. The people of this region were converted to Christianity before the end of the Tenth century. The ruling dynasty, descended from Northmen, became completely slavicized. It ultimately became divided into a number of connected but competing families. For a time however Eastern Europe was united in a loose dynastic state having as its centre Kiev. This Kiev state achieved a high degree of culture and prosperity about the year 1000. Ultimately it tended to break up into principalities.

The political tradition of the Ukrainian people is rooted in the Kiev state.



3. The Galician-Volynian Area and Other Ukrainian Principalities in the Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries.

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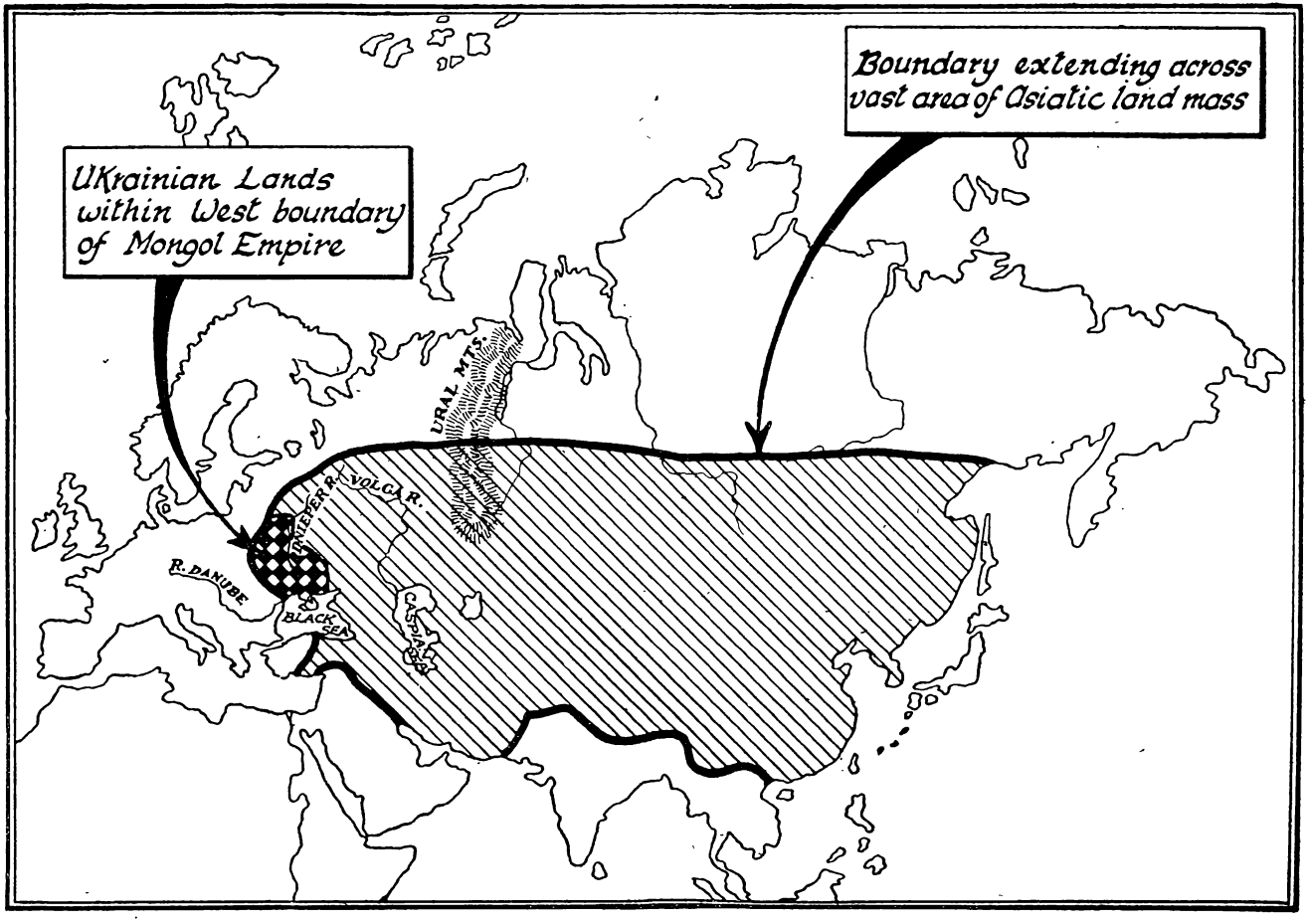
The Galician-Volynian area was of special importance in Ukrainian history after the decline of Kiev as the dominating dynastic centre and particularly after the Mongol invasion of 1240 (see next pages). For over two hundred and fifty years it constituted a link in the Ukrainian historical tradition (1087-1340). While undergoing many changes of boundaries and dynastic control in this period it finally achieved independence under the rule of a descendant of the Kiev ruling family. The outstanding prince was Daniel, who received the title of king in 1253. He built and established his capital at Lviv. The country enjoyed relative prosperity, carried on the cultural life inherited from Kiev, and was an important connecting region between East and West Europe. The Volynian part of the area finally became attached to Lithuania and the Galician part to Poland. Lithuania and Poland were subsequently united.



4. Ukrainian Lands within the Mongol Empire.

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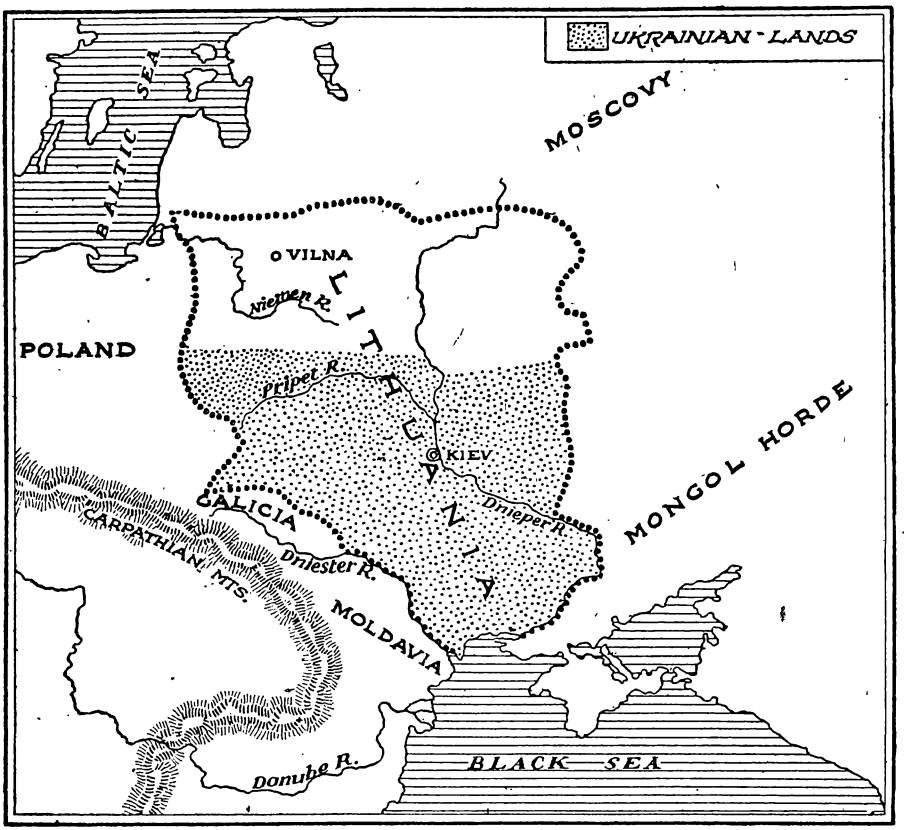
From the most ancient times the region north of the Black Sea has been subjected to invasion from the grasslands of Asia. Some of these invaders gained a temporary foothold in the steppes, some passed westward into South-East Europe, while others were held back in the neighborhood of the Volga river and Caspian Sea. In the Thirteenth century (A.D.) there occurred in Eastern Europe the most devastating of all invasions, the invasion of Tatar hordes under Mongol leadership. Kiev was captured in 1240. The ruthlessness of this onslaught paralyzed the developing political and cultural life of Eastern Europe, giving an ascendancy to Western Europe which has remained to the present day. Along with other regions in Eastern Europe the Ukrainian lands were brought within the boundaries of a vast Empire which extended across to the Pacific ocean. It was only with the emergence of a new political grouping under the Princes of Lithuania that these Ukrainian lands lying on the extreme western circumference of the Mongol Empire were freed from the political control of the Asiatic horde. This Tatar horde continued however to bring havoc to the life of the people in this region for centuries.



5. Ukrainian Lands under Lithuania.

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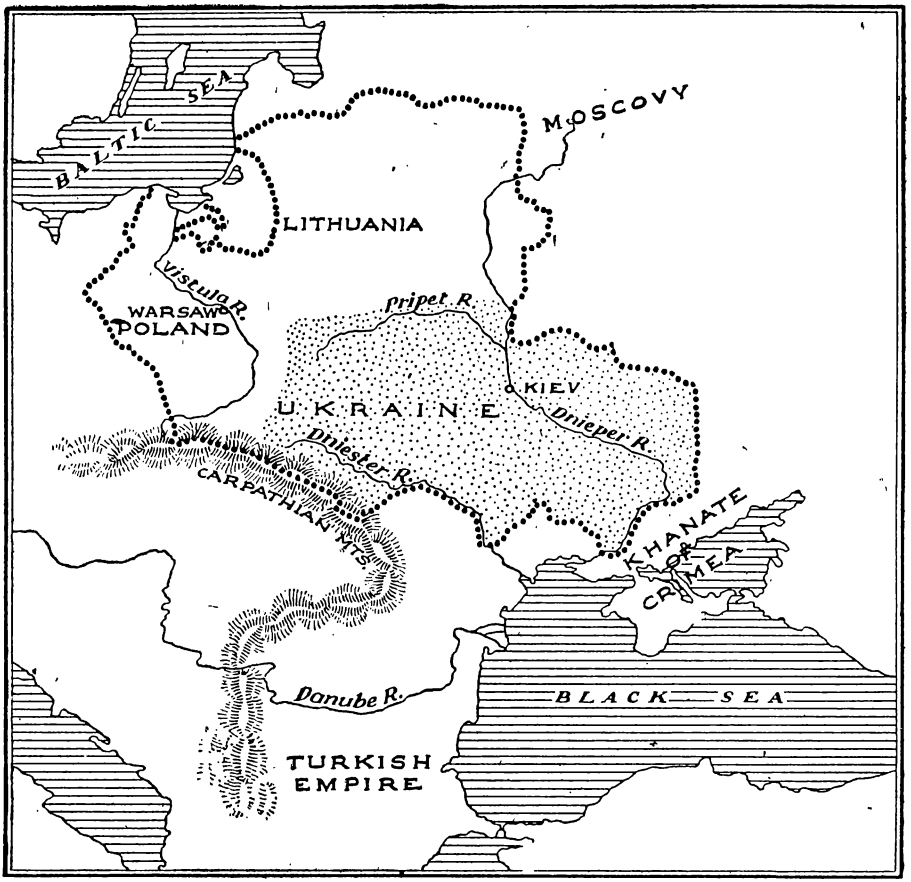
In the Thirteenth century at the very time when the Mongols were extending their Empire toward the Caspian and Black Sea the Germans in a crusading-colonizing drive were establishing themselves on the south-east shores of the Baltic. This aggression galvanized into activity the Lithuanian people of that region. Under able rulers tribes were consolidated, and a rapid expansion carried the Lithuanian power toward the south, and for a time even as far as the Black Sea. This expansion resulted in Lithuania becoming chiefly a Slavic state. The extension of the Lithuanian dynastic control proceeded without a serious upheaval because the Lithuanian princes did not attempt to alter the language, religion or customs of the people. Indeed they freely adopted the language, religion and laws of the Slavic area and intermarried with the local ruling houses. By 1370 the Lithuanian rule had replaced Mongol-Tatar control over the greater part of the Ukrainian lands. By this new association the Ukrainian people, while retaining their own customs, became still further differentiated from other Slavic groups.



6. The Ukraine in Poland in the Sixteenth Century.

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In the Fourteenth century three Slavic Powers in Eastern Europe were undergoing rapid expansion: Moscovy, a power on the Upper Volga which was being consolidated around Moscow; Poland, which lay to the west in the region of the Vistula river; and the great central power of Lithuania, whose rulers were the descendants of the Lithuanian dynasty, but whose population was overwhelmingly Slav and chiefly composed of Ukrainians. Rivalry and dynastic connections between these three countries were inevitable. Through intermarriage of members of the ruling houses Poland and Lithuania were joined in a dynastic union in 1386. The administration of these areas however remained separate. It was not until 1569 that the two countries were united in an organic union under the King of Poland. By this Union all the Ukrainian lands came under Poland. Ukrainian history was thus linked with the social trends, political fortunes and fate of the Polish state.

7. The Ukraine in the Middle of the Seventeenth Century, the Period of Cossack Revolt against Poland.

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In the second half of the Sixteenth century, in the period when Poland and Lithuania had entered into an organic union, there was a vigorous development taking place in the south-east area, the Ukraine. This was associated with the extension of settlement into the steppe lands toward the Black Sea. Owing to the dangers arising from proximity to the Tatars in the Crimea, and the hazards of frontier life, a special organization known as the Cossacks emerged and was elaborated. This produced not only a flexible fighting force but it had a political and social significance as well. On the political side it meant that the Cossacks had their own elective offices, a system of justice, and administrative rule. The Cossacks finally revolted against Polish rule and in the middle of the Seventeenth century they threw off Polish control. In the meantime there had been a very flourishing development of cultural life in Kiev. This renewed cultural and political activity of the Ukrainian people was associated by them with the traditions of the old Kiev state.

8. Beauplan's Map of the Ukraine, Seventeenth Century.

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The rise of the Ukrainian Cossack state brought the Ukraine into prominence throughout Europe. Envoys and representatives from different countries were sent to establish contact with the emergent state. Thus the Ukraine became well known to Western Europe at this time.

In 1635 the Poles had employed a French engineer, Beauplan, to build a fortress at Kodak on the rapids of the Dnieper river. The fortress was to serve the double purpose of overawing the Cossacks and keeping the Tatars in check. The engineer not only wrote an interesting account of the country entitled Description of the Ukraine but made a map of the area which is reproduced here to indicate how Europe viewed the Ukraine in the middle of the Seventeenth century.

(Beauplan's Map was originally printed in 1648. The map given here is reproduced from the Oxford edition printed in 1680.)

9. Division of the Ukraine between Poland and Russia in 1667.

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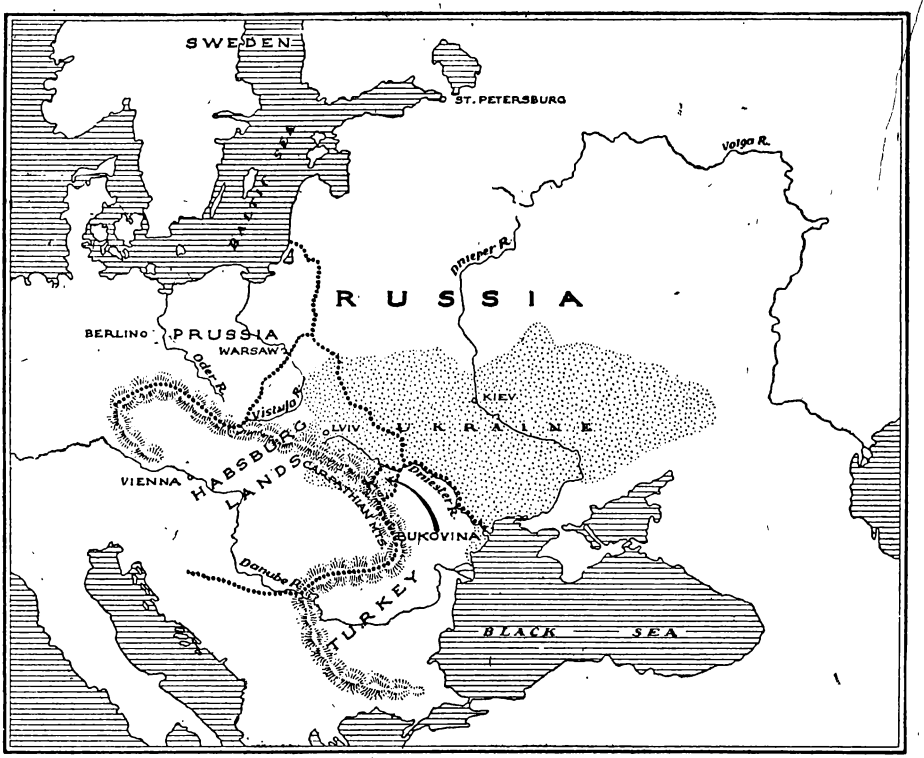
The Cossack state found it difficult to maintain its freedom against Polish hostility, Turkish expansion, Tatar treachery and the ambitions of the Tsar at Moscow. In 1654 the Hetman* of the Cossacks entered into treaty relations with the rising power of Moscovy, whose Grand Dukes had already assumed the title, Tsars of Russia. The Treaty guaranteed the autonomy of the Ukraine, and its freedom in foreign relations except with reference to Poland and Turkey. The Tsar agreed to protect the Ukraine. War with Poland ensued. Notwithstanding the agreement of 1654 the Tsar consented to a Treaty with Poland in 1667 by which the Ukraine was divided. The area to the west of the Dnieper river, now commonly referred to as the Right Bank, was left to Poland, while the Tsar retained his position as suzerain and protector of the area east of the middle Dnieper, known as Left Bank. Having gained for the first time in history a foothold in the Ukraine, as indicated on the map, the Tsar proceeded to undermine and limit the autonomy of the area with a view to the final suppression of its liberty and its complete subordination to the policies of Moscow.

* Elective head of the State.



10. Ukrainian Lands in the Eighteenth Century after the Polish Partitions (1795), Showing Boundary between Russia, Prussia, Habsburg Lands (Austria) and Turkey.

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The Eighteenth century saw the rapid territorial expansion on the part of Russia, Prussia and the Habsburg Lands. The chief victims of this imperial expansion were Sweden, Turkey, and Poland. Poland was completely partitioned. As a result of this partitioning Russia gained control of the larger part of the remaining Ukrainian lands, while the western section, north of the Carpathian mountains, now came for the first time under Habsburg (Austrian) rule.

The government in Russia, following a despotic trend, finally extinguished in this century all aspects of Ukrainian autonomy. The Ukrainian people were thus reduced to the lowest ebb in their national and social life.

In addition to the Ukrainian lands taken from Poland the Habsburgs received from Turkey in 1775 the province of Bukovina.

11. The Division of the Ukrainian Lands between the Russian and Austrian Empires in the Nineteenth Century Following the Congress Treaty of Vienna in 1815.

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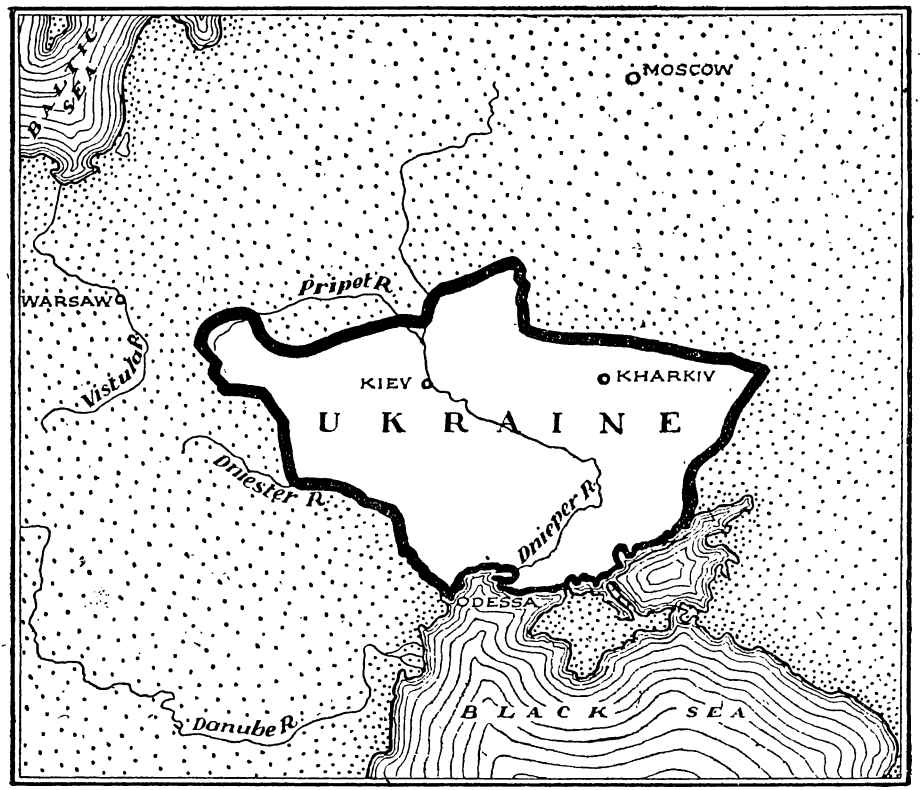
The final result of the French Revolution and Napoleonic upheaval (1798-1815) with respect to the territorial division of Ukrainian lands was a further extension of the Russian Empire toward the West. In 1815 Russia was left in possession of Bessarabia and the greater part of Poland including Warsaw. Thus the largest section of the Ukraine was in Russia.

The Austrian Empire retained Bukovina and Galicia. The Ukrainians who inhabited the eastern part of Galicia and the northern section of Bukovina were called Ruthenians by the Austrian government.

It was during the Nineteenth century, the period characterized throughout Europe generally by growing liberal and national movements, that the modern Ukrainian national movement became a factor of increasing importance in the politics of Central Europe.



12. The Ukrainian National Republic as Established 22 January, 1918.

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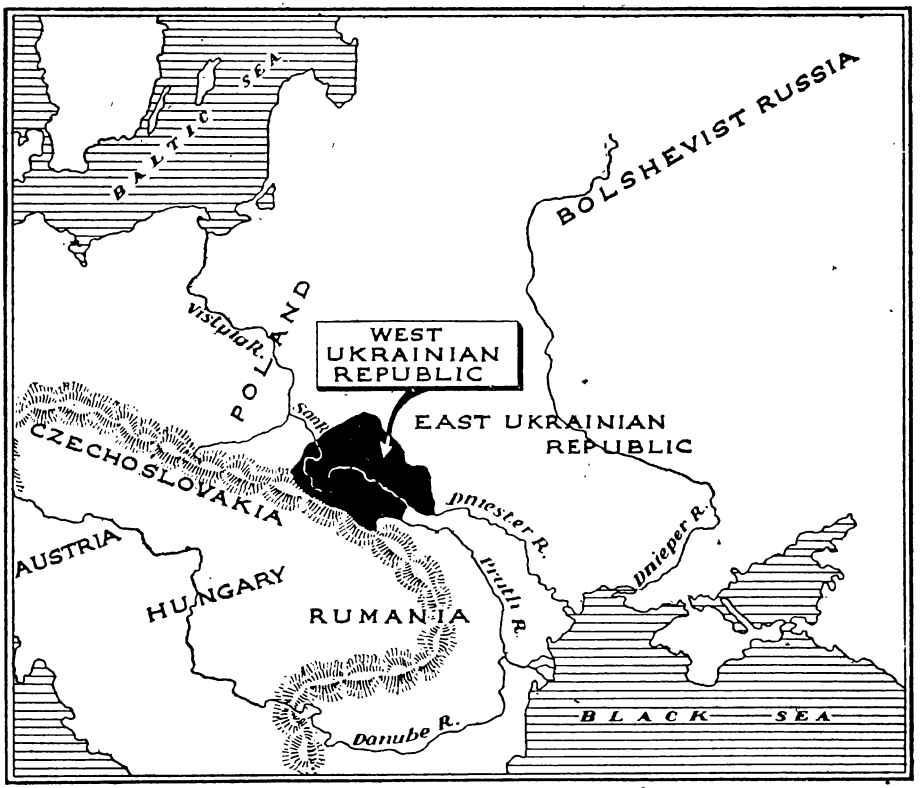
The Ukrainian national movement continued to develop up to the outbreak of the War in 1914. This war involved fighting on the Eastern front between Russia and Austria-Hungary. Much of the war on this front was fought on Ukrainian lands and brought great misery to the Ukrainian people who found themselves divided between the two enemies of their freedom.

In March, 1917, revolution broke out in Russia and the Tsarist government was overthrown. The Ukrainians there welcomed this liberal upheaval and quickly formed a National Central Council. In July, 1917, the Provisional Government of Russia recognized the Ukraine as a self-governing unit within the Russian state. The Bolshevik Revolution of November, 1917, swept away the Provisional Government of Russia, whereupon in opposition to the Bolsheviks the Ukrainian National Central Council on the 22nd January, 1918, proclaimed the Ukraine as an Independent National Republic.



13. The West Ukrainian National Republic as Established by Ukrainian National Council in Galicia 1 November, 1918

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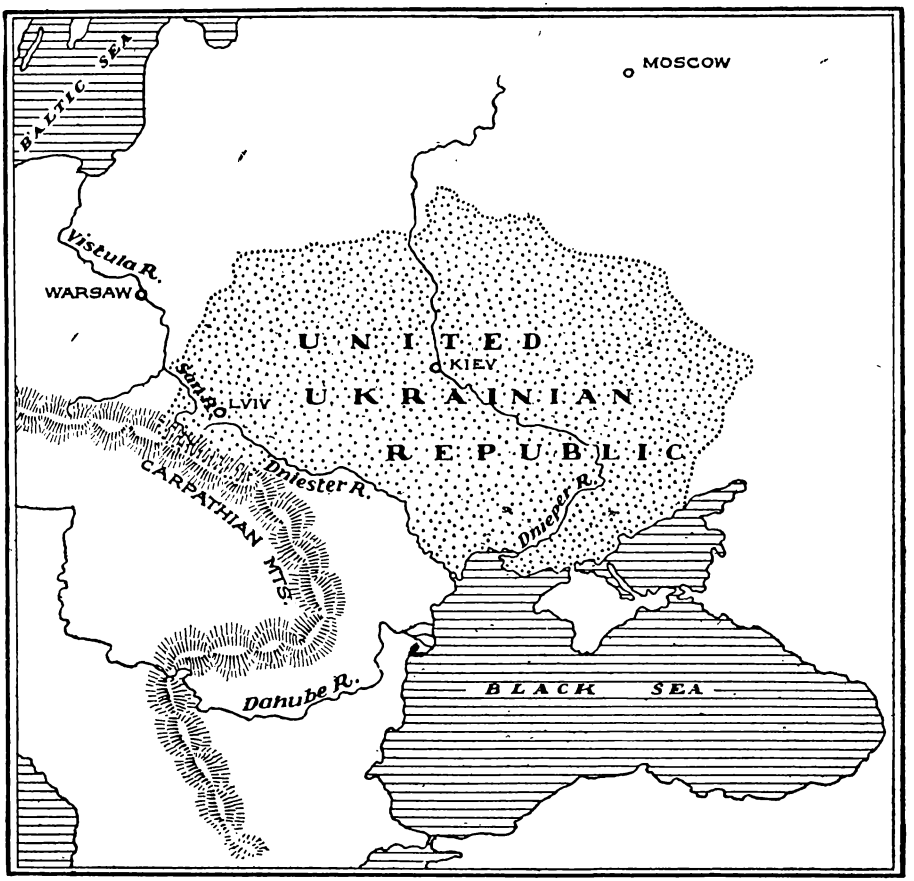
The Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed in October, 1918, in the year following the collapse of the Russian Empire. The Ukrainians in East Galicia immediately organized a National Council and proclaimed the independence of the West Ukrainian National Republic. This was to include all those areas of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire inhabited by Ukrainians. Other national groups within this Empire, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Rumanians, and Hungarians were also establishing their national states. Rival claims to territories developed. The Ukrainians in their newly-established state found themselves faced on the west, south and south-east by groups hostile to their national existence. A particularly fierce struggle developed and continued for some nine months between the Ukrainians and the Poles, who wished to incorporate the Ukrainian area into their own re-emerging state.



14. United Ukrainian Republic as Proclaimed 22 January, 1919.

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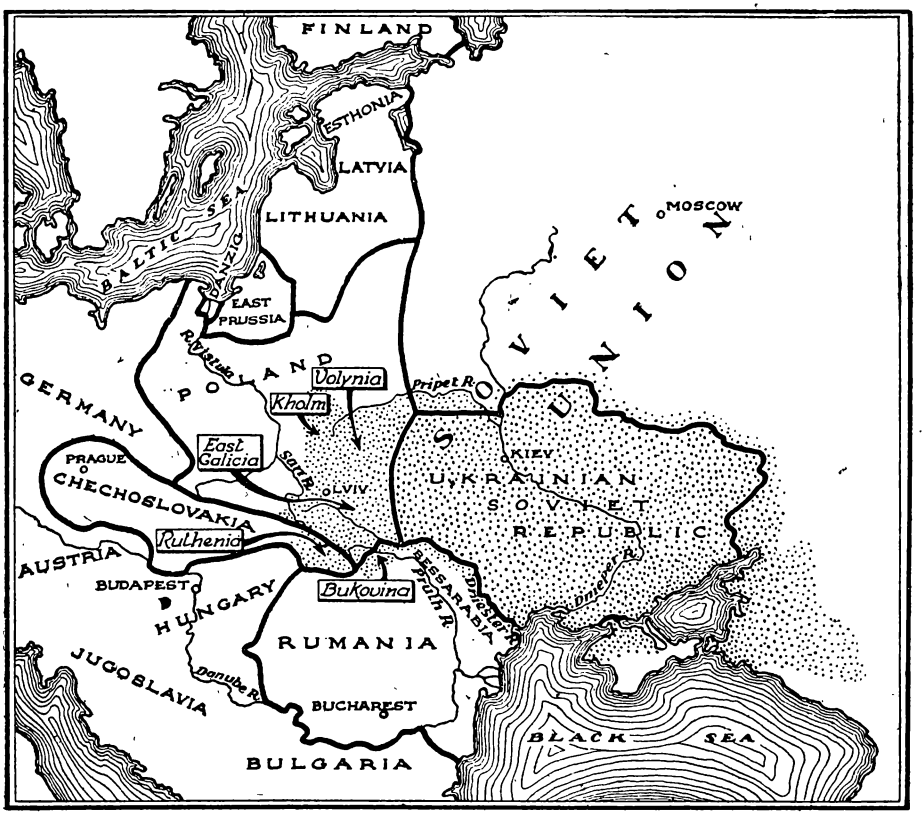
The Ukrainian National Republic which had been established in January, 1918, had a stormy career. The Central Powers who had recognized it by the Treaty of Brest Litovsk (February 1918) attemped to exploit its grain supplies. The Bolshevists also wished to extend their control over this rich area. Revolutionary movements of various kinds agitated the country following the end of the Great War by the Armistice of November 1918. Amidst these difficulties the Ukrainian nationalists worked hard to establish the foundation of their state.

In the meantime the West Ukrainian Republic was attempting to stem the tide of Polish aggression. Its Ukrainian army was being driven eastward by the forces of Poland, supported by France. Under these circumstances the two Ukrainian Governments decided to unite and on 22 January, 1919, the union of the two Ukrainian States was proclaimed in Kiev.

While the Government which proclaimed this unity did not have at that time the physical force to protect it, this Act of Union represents the national objective of Ukrainian patriots, then and since.



15. Central Europe between the World Wars, 1923-1938, Showing Boundaries between Soviet Union, Rumania. Poland and Czechoslovakia, and Indicating the Ukrainian Areas in Each of These Countries.

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The efforts of the Ukrainian nationalists to establish a United Ukrainian State in the years 1917-1920 were frustrated by the hostility and ambitions of their neighbors, by the ravages of a typhus epidemic, and the lack of understanding in Western Europe of the Ukrainian problem.

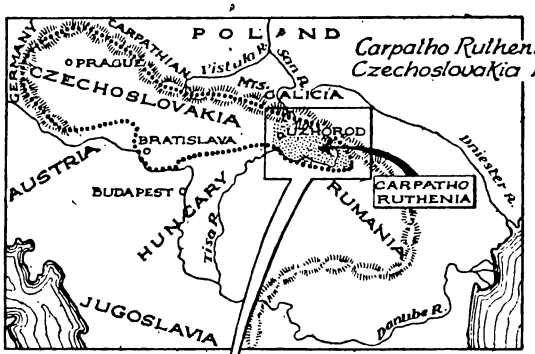
In the Eastern Ukraine the Bolshevists established control. So strong however was the tide of Ukrainian nationalism that the Bolshevist leaders had to organize the Ukraine separately as a Ukrainian Soviet Republic, and while they attached the area to Moscow through the iron ties of party leadership and economic subjection they had to grant to the inhabitants a semblance of cultural freedom.

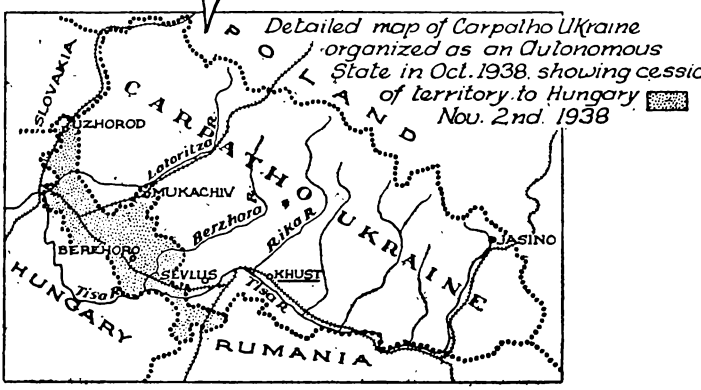
It was the original intention of the Paris Peace Conference to give to the Ukrainians of East Galicia the right of self-determination and home rule. Poland resisted this solution and with the help of France occupied the country. Finally in 1923 the Council of Ambassadors, representing the disbanded Peace Conference, recognized Polish sovereignty over the area on the understanding that autonomy would be granted. This autonomy did not materialize.

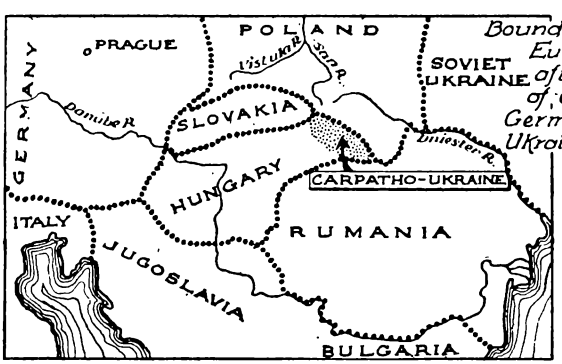
Rumania which gained large areas by the Peace Treaties was allowed to retain Bukovina which she had occupied with her army at the end of the War. She also overran Bessarabia. In both areas the Ukrainian population protested without avail.

An area on the southern slope of the Carpathian mountains, known as Ruthenia, revolted against Hungary. It was joined to Czechoslovakia upon promise of autonomy.

Thus the Ukrainian people now found themselves partitioned between four states.







16. Carpatho Ukraine in the Crisis of 1938-39,

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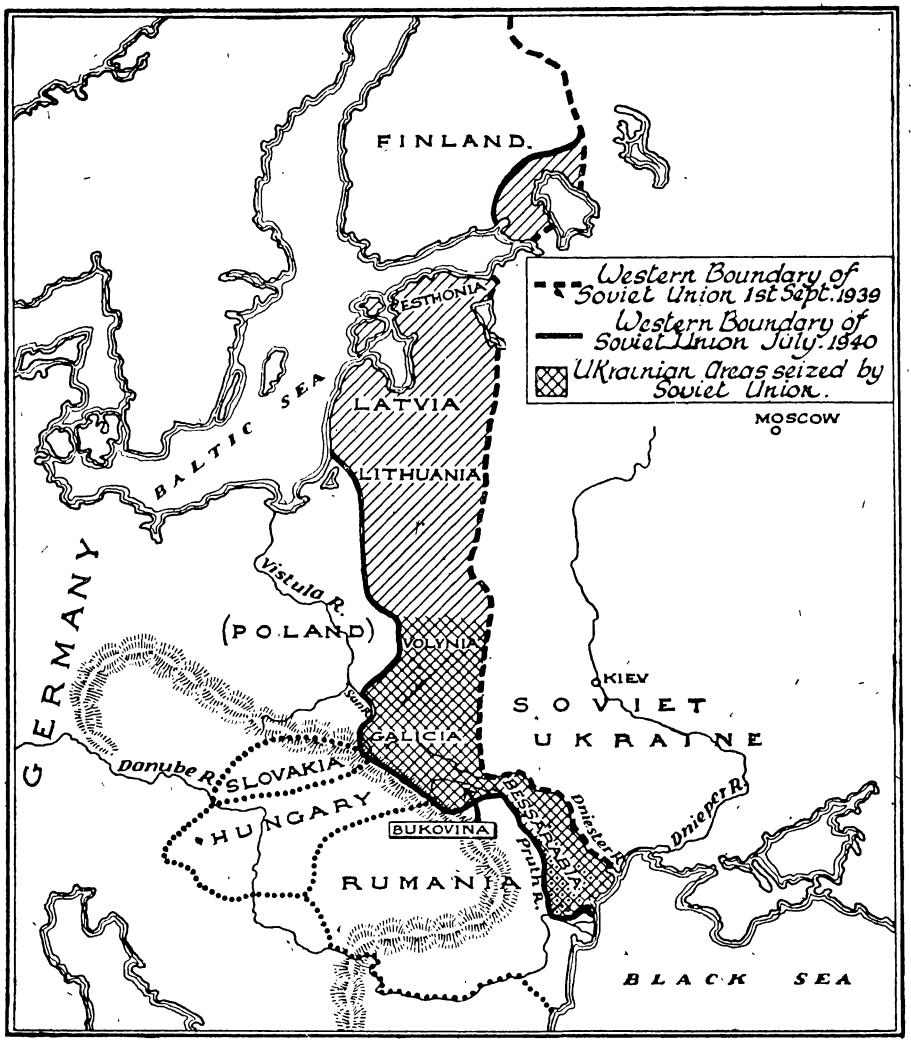
The area known as Carpatho Ruthenia consisting of some 12,631 square miles and containing a population of over half a million was situated between the upper Tisa river and the crest of the Carpathian mountains. It was economically poor and least developed in national consciousness of all the Ukrainian areas.

In 1919 it was attached to Czecholovakia under promise of autonomy. Its inclusion in the Czechoslovak state gave that country direct connection with Rumania. Ruthenia made marked progress under Czech rule but the withholding of autonomy accentuated the growing national feeling which began to manifest itself against Czech control.

In September, 1938, when overwhelming pressure from Hitler resulted in the cession of the Sudeten area of Czechoslovakia to Germany and compelled a reorganization of the Czechoslovak state Carpatho Ruthenia received autonomy though it was forced to cede the southern part of its area to Hungary. Carpatho Ruthenia now officially adopted the name, Carpatho Ukraine.

In March, 1939, Germany occupied the Czech part of the Czechoslovak state and proclaimed that it took under its "protection" the "independent" state of Slovakia. Carpatho Ukraine proclaimed its own independence on March 14th, 1939, but was immediately overwhelmed by an invading Hungarian army and forcibly incorporated into Hungary.



17. Area in Eastern Europe Seized by the Soviet Union September, 1939 to July, 1940.

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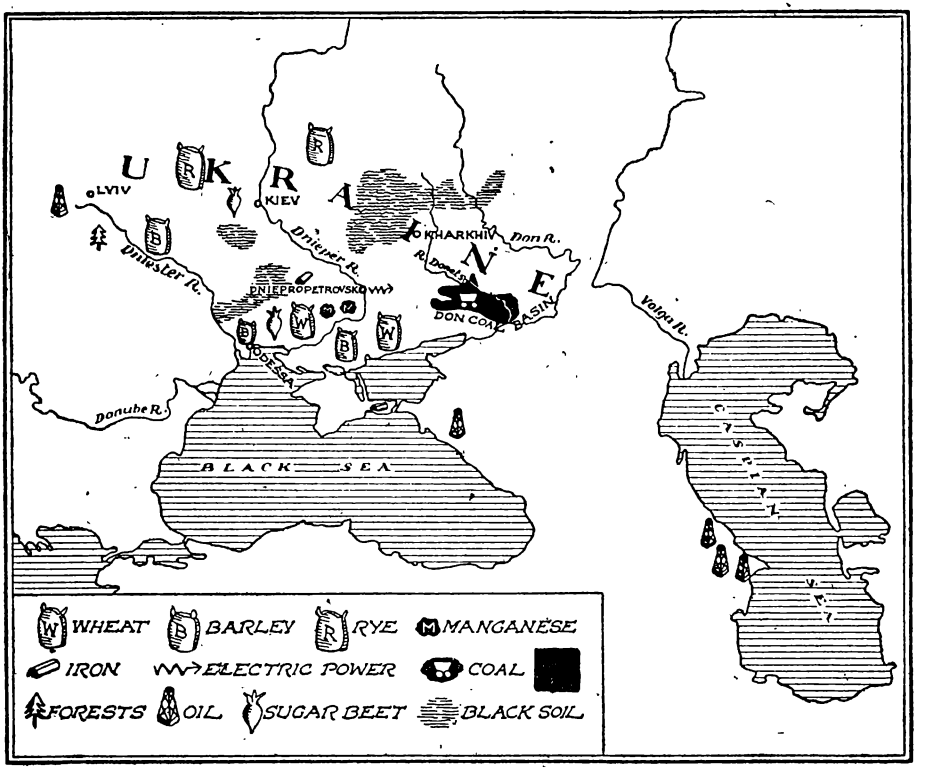
The outbreak of the Second World War in September, 1939, was preceded by a commercial and a non-aggression treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union. After Germany had broken the back of Polish resistance the Soviet Union despatched its armies westward occupying north-east Poland; Volynia and East Galicia. A Treaty of Partition between Germany and the Soviet Union left these areas occupied by Russian troops to the Soviet Union. Thus the Ukrainian areas of Poland with the exception of Kholm and some districts in the south were added to the Soviet Union.

Soon after this the Soviet Union began an aggressive war against Finland and in spite of heroic resistance overwhelmed that small state seizing several strips of territory along its borders.

The fateful month of June, 1940, which saw the collapse of France also saw the final seizure by the Soviet Union of the Baltic states, Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The Soviet Union also demanded of Rumania the immediate cession of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina. Rumania was forced to comply. Thus the Soviet boundary was advanced to the mounth of the Danube.

By July, 1940, all the Ukrainians in Europe were within the Soviet Union with the exception of about half a million in Carpatho Ukraine which had been taken by Hungary, several hundred thousand in the part of Poland occupied by Germany, and a few scattered groups elsewhere.



18. Map Indicating the Economic Importance of the Ukraine.

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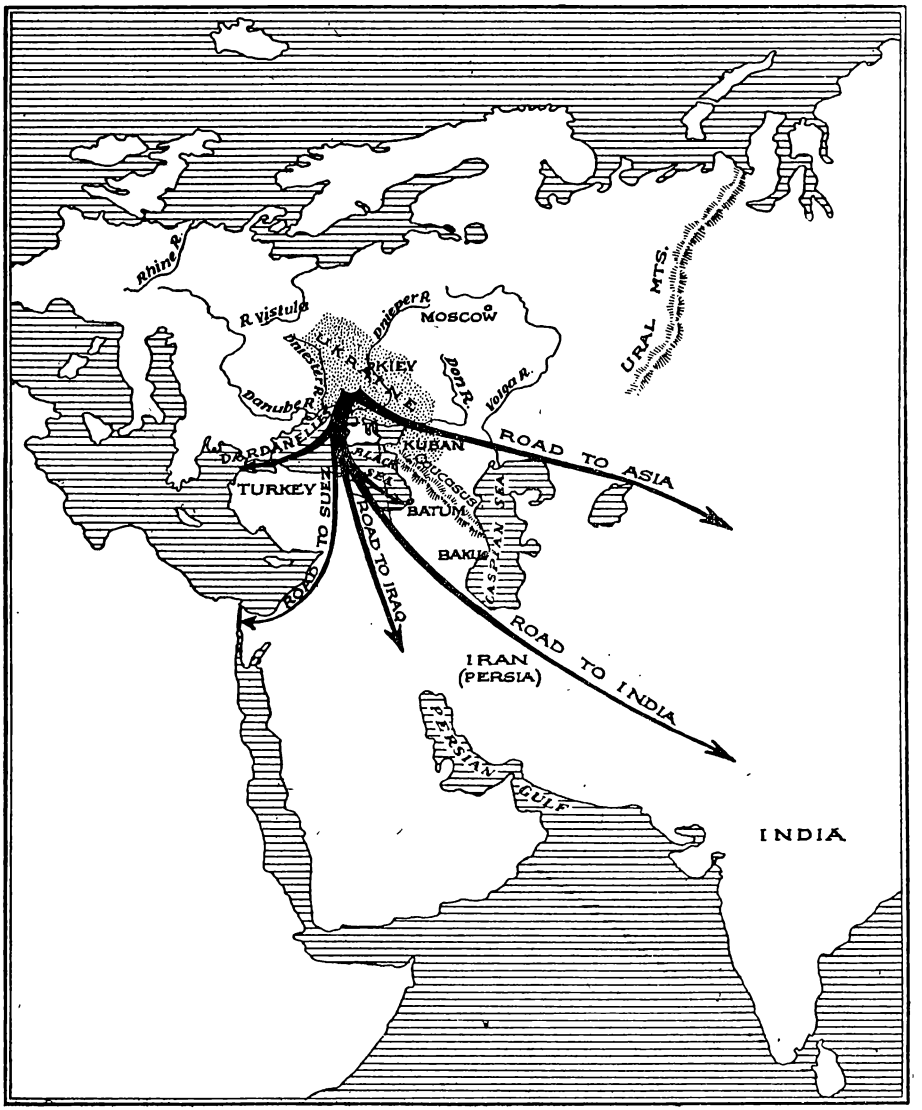
The area of the Ukraine is one of the richest regions of Europe in agricultural and mineral resources. The chief agricultural products are wheat, rye, barley and sugar beets, and live stock. The main mineral deposits are coal, iron and manganese. The range of resources makes possible not only industrialization but a fairly balanced economy.

In the production of wheat, rye, barley and sugar beets the Ukraine occupies third place among the countries of the world. The grain lands of the Ukraine have been famous throughout historic times. These lands include an area of the richest black soil on the continent, and other wide stretches of prairie, or steppe regions, where the land is fertile but not so rich. Secondary to grain growing is live stock production. Normally some eight million horses, twelve million cattle, twelve million sheep and ten million hogs are maintained in the Ukraine. These figures were greatly reduced during the period of forcible collectivization (1929-1935).

The Ukraine produces annually some eighty-one million tons of coal of all grades, twenty-one million tons of iron ore, eleven million tons of pig iron and about eight million tons of steel. In addition the Ukraine is one of the world's large producers of manganese ore. The advantage of the proximity of coal, iron and manganese deposits is further enhanced by the neighboring electrical power project of the Dnieper river which is capable of producing 450,000 horsepower, the largest of its kind in Europe.

In addition to these huge resources the Ukraine possesses a wide range of other products.



19. The Ukraine in its Strategic Setting.

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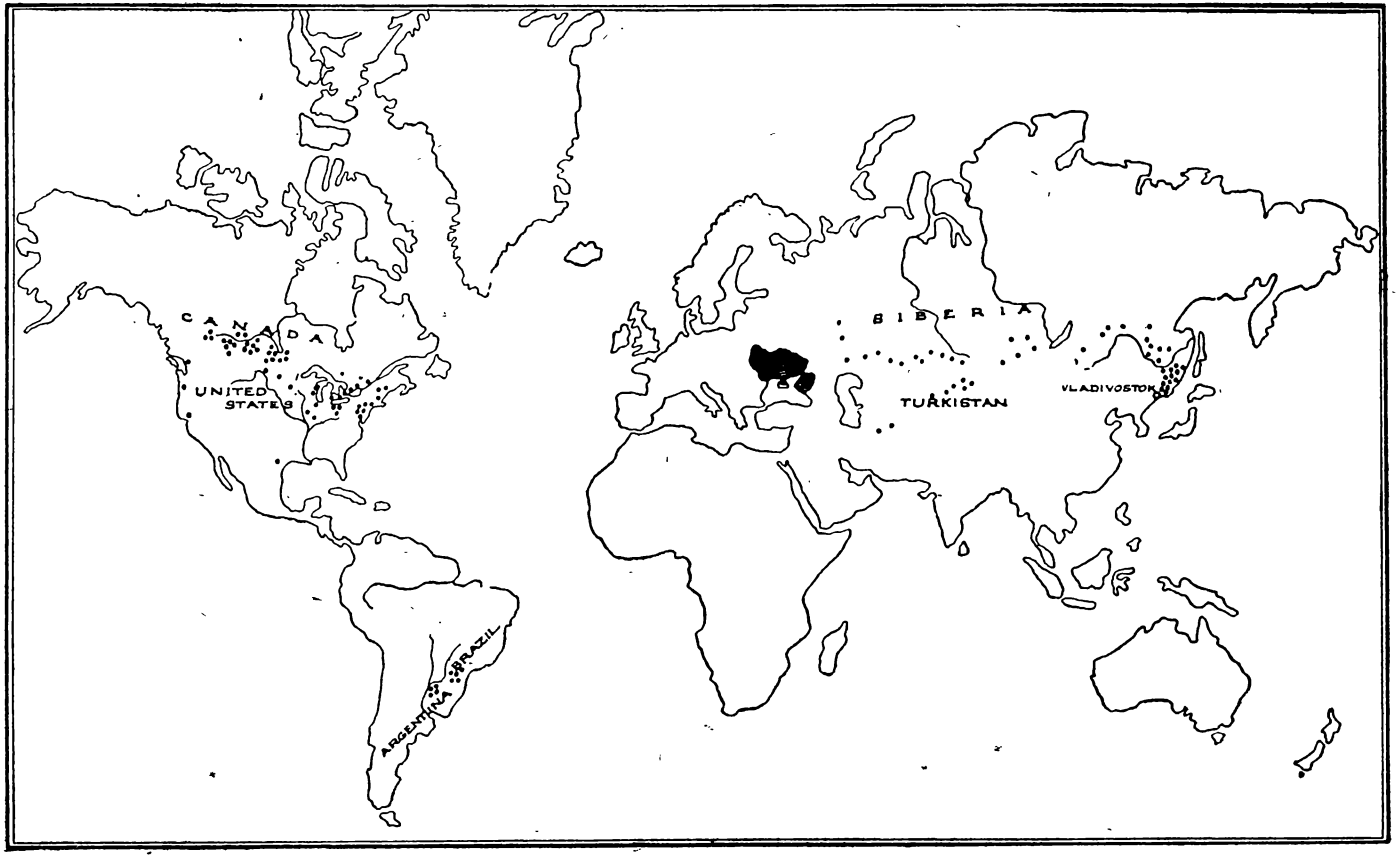
The Ukraine is strategically important because it constitutes, above all, the lid of the Black Sea. The outlet of the great rivers which flow into this sea from the north, the Don, the Dnieper, and the Dniester, are controlled by the power that rules the Ukraine. On the west of the Ukraine is the mouth of the Danube river flowing from Central Europe. Eastward is the Kuban coming from the Caucasus mountains. About equidistant to the southwest and south-east lie the Dardanelles, entrance to the Black Sea from the west; and Batum, the chief Black Sea terminal of the Baku oil wells.

From its position north of the Black Sea the Ukraine might either be the starting point for a military invasion of Asia, or constitute, as so often in the past, a bastion of defence against Asiatic inroads. Southward from the Black Sea, outflanking the Caucasus mountains, lies a road which might run eastward to Iran, the Persian Gulf and India; or southward to Iraq (Mesopotamia); or south-westward through Turkey, Syria, Palestine, and across the Suez into Egypt.

Thus the Ukraine constitutes a wide assembling place which could be used either by ambitious dictators as the starting point for sweeping military conquest, or by wise statesmen as a strong wedge-like area of defence which would stabilize all those regions tributary to the Black Sea.



20. Ukrainian Emigration.

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Until the end of the Nineteenth century the Ukrainians remained rooted in their ancestral soil, the region north of the Black Sea. The impact of various modern movements and upheavals then impelled individuals and groups to migrate beyond their homelands. While Ukrainians are found scattered in every country throughout the world the bulk migration was directed chiefly toward four regions.

The chief migratory movement, facilitated by the building of the trans-Siberian railway, carried Ukrainians across Asia through Siberia, Turkistan, and to the Maritime province on the Pacific ocean. Between two and three million Ukrainians were thus transplanted.

The second largest movement directed itself toward the United States. Over half a million people are now settled there, chiefly in the industrial areas of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and in various centres extending from New England to Chicago. There are other smaller groups in the western states.

Between two and three hundred thousand Ukrainians migrated to Canada. Some are found in the industrial and mining centres of the East and in British Columbia but the overwhelming majority are settled in the three prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

There are two large settlements of Ukrainians in South America, one in Brazil and one in Argentina. The former number some fifty thousand and the latter forty thousand.

Postscript

As these pages go to press the German army is trampling the fields and bombing the towns of the Ukraine, and another chapter of misery is being added to the unhappy history of that area. Whatever may transpire in the immediate future it is certain that the Ukrainians will continue in the future, as they have in the past, to resist exploitation and conquest from whatever quarter it may come. This battle for freedom is no longer simply a question of some boundaries and some particular groups; it is a matter of world-wide importance which is the responsibility of all libertyloving people. A sound international society can be built only on the basis of the union of free peoples united in their resistance to aggression and in their determination to achieve justice for all. In the matter of justice the Ukrainian people have their claims and their responsibilities.

July, 1941. G. W. S.